

Troubleshooting for Memory Cards

1. Not showing the right capacity

Common programs, including Windows, system BIOS and some old versions of MacOS, use the binary number system, where 1 GB amounts to 1024 MBs, rather than 1000 MBs, which leads to this anomaly in storage devices.

The best way to check the true capacity of your drive is to check the number of 'bytes', rather than MBs and GBs, as the latter could be somewhat confusing. For manufacturers, 1 MB is 1000 kB, but for Windows, 1 MB is 1024 KB (which is actually 1024 kibibytes). This is why, when you plug a storage device into a Windows computer, the total available space appears slightly less than what's advertised.

2. Memory Card Is Write-Protected

Most memory cards come with a small switch. When the switch is turned on, you will be able to write data into the card. When you try, you will get related write failure error messages. In this case, actually, the memory card is write-protected.

Solution: This issue is very simple to be resolved. You can just turn off the switch. If it fails to unlock the card, you could proceed to toggle the switch back and forth several times and wait several minutes. After that, try to reuse it. If error persists, you have to format the card.

3. Card Cannot Be Used/Read

When you try to use the card, you may receive "this card cannot be used" or "this card cannot be read" error messages on the device screen. This issue is also very common.

Solution: In this case, you should restart the device, no matter camera or phone. And then retry. Most of time, the issue will be gone. If the error still exists, you have no choice but to back up the data and format the card.

4. Invalid File System in the Card

Sometimes, when you attempt to access the memory card on your PC, you may be prompted that the card has no valid file system. It either means that the card has no file system or its file system cannot be recognized by the PC.

Solution: In this scenario, you can firstly run CHKDSK to scan and repair the card. If it fails, you have no alternative to format this card. But notice that you're better off backing up its data before format.

5. Memory Card Runs Slowly

Sometimes, you may feel that your memory card runs much more slowly when transferring data than before. Undoubtedly, it means that something wrong must occur to your card.

Solution: First, you can try to transfer a small amount of data to see if the speed is still very slow. If so, you can format the card, which may solve this issue.

6. Memory Card Cannot Be Read by Computer

If you want to access the memory card from your computer, you will usually use a card reader. At this point, it is also a frequent case where you find that the card cannot be read by your PC.

Solution: Most of time, this problem comes from computer's faults. You need to check if the involved drivers are updated. Moreover, re-connect the card to PC to see if issue persists.

7. Missing or Unreadable Files in the Card

You may discover that some files on your memory card are missing, disappear or become unreadable for some reasons.

Solution: Perhaps some files are in hidden status. You can change them back to become visible on your computer. If this is not the actual reason, you may need to recur to related data recovery software to have a try.

8. Memory Card Shows Empty Somehow

Another worse case is that all the files are gone. Your memory card shows empty directly. But you can ensure that there must be data in it before.

Solution: Chances are that the memory card may be virus or malware infected. Under this circumstance, you can first run antivirus software to kill the potential viruses and then show all hidden files. If you still cannot get back missing files, it is recommended to resort to data recovery utility or service.

9. Physically Damaged Memory Card

Memory card is so sensitive that it can become damaged physically only due to a few tiny changes, such as extreme heat or cold, water or fire and so on.

Solution: This issue is serious beyond what you can do on your own. Thus, it is advisable to seek assistance from data recovery service or related experts.